

## BOOK REVIEWS

**RH... ITS RELATION TO CONGENITAL HEMOLYTIC DISEASE AND TO INTRAGROUP TRANSFUSION REACTIONS.** By Edith L. Potter, M.D., Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Pathology, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, The University of Chicago and the Chicago Lying-In Hospital. Year Book Publishers, Inc., 304 S. Dearborn St., Chicago. Price \$5.50.

At last we have in handbook form a complete review and abstract of the essential material on the subject of the Rh factor and its clinical importance in hemolytic disease of the newborn, intra-group transfusion reactions, and the whole problem of the isoimmunization of pregnancy. The author, Dr. Edith L. Potter, is eminently qualified to bring balance and sanity to a subject which has been unnecessarily confused and muddled by artful and artless fancy. An unusual feature of the book is its authoritative and complete analysis of the pathological import of hemolytic disease of the newborn. Doctor Potter has made many pertinent contributions to this subject and she is a recognized authority in the field. Another fine feature is the exhaustive bibliography, alphabetically arranged and covering more than 800 references.

Doctor Potter is not only a pathologist, but she holds an active appointment in the clinical field of Obstetrics at the University of Chicago. Therefore her experience with diseases of the newborn extends from the bedside to the post-mortem table.

The early chapters of the book deal with the discovery of the Rh factor, its biologic and immunologic properties and its role in the pathogenesis of transfusion reactions and hemolytic disease of the newborn. This material is well presented and expressed with great simplicity. The part of the volume that deals with technical applications of the problem is again very well organized and designed to answer the usual questions proposed by the clinician. Doctor Potter finds space to discuss some of the phases of the prevention of hemolytic disease of the newborn, including moral, philosophic, and biologic aspects of the subject. She appends simple rules for avoiding unnecessary immunization. On the subject of prevention, she discusses the use of blocking antibody, purified haptens, agglutinin absorption, typhoid and pertussis vaccination, and the weighty problem of the early induction of labor. Included in this section are notes on the subject of artificial insemination. There is a short but adequate chapter on treatment. There also is included a section dealing with the technical data encountered in the laboratory, and very good photographs of the details and technique of the Rh agglutinin test. Throughout the volume the reader is impressed by the scientific accuracy and honesty of the reviewer and the gentle humor of her criticism which to the reader might have been more profitable had it been more harsh. The book could have been made more valuable had this eminently qualified author given more of her own conclusions

rather than the controversial ones of much less qualified workers in the field.

I hope that the next edition will contain a more complete Table of Contents, a fault not of the author but of the publisher, since the author made provision for extensive indexing by including topical headings of each new subject within the text of each chapter.

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**ALLERGY IN THEORY AND PRACTICE.** By Robert A. Cooke, M.D., Sc. D., F.A.C.P., Attending Physician and Director of the Department of Allergy, the Roosevelt Hospital, New York City. 572 pages, with 43 illustrations. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Company. 1947. Price \$8.00.

This book discusses the mechanism, diagnosis and control of most clinical allergy. Cooke properly decries too great dependence on skin testing. His question about the role of histamine in the allergic reactivity, his inability to benefit urticaria or chronic asthma or increase tolerance for histamine with histamine therapy and his disapproval of hapamine coincide with the idea of many allergists. Most allergists will disagree, however, with this exclusive use of intradermal tests and the unnecessary standardization of extracts by the protein nitrogen unit rather than by weight (Noon unit). General experience, moreover, shows that bronchial asthma in all ages is due to food and inhalant allergy, occasionally to drug allergy and rarely to bacterial allergy, to which Cooke gives great importance. Sinus surgery to remove hyperplastic membranes as a source of assumed bacterial allergy is rarely if ever required when food and inhalant and rarely bacterial allergies are controlled. His use of opiates, barbiturates and even demoral and paraldehyde in asthma will receive general disapproval.

Allergists will not agree with his idea that allergic dermatitis is never due to wheal-producing food and inhalant allergens as in hay fever. His cited cases of contact allergy to foods, drugs and chemicals fail to prove this mechanism as the usual cause.

Cooke discusses urticaria and angioneurotic edema and probable clinical allergy in the gastrointestinal tract, nervous tissues and eyes. In general food allergy is not sufficiently recognized due to his failure to use trial or elimination diets properly for adequate periods of time. The experience of many physicians, moreover, will refute the statement that "this matter of allergy diets is a much overrated fad."

Spain's discussion of bronchial asthma due to ingested foods and drugs will receive general approval. Harkavy's chapter on cardiovascular allergy should be studied by all internists and allergists, particularly that arising from tobacco and bacterial allergies. Waltzer offers helpful suggestions about

skin testing and describes indirect testing which he originated.

Finally, Cooke confirms the failure of vitamin C to benefit allergy and decries the tendency to attribute true manifestations of allergy to psychosomatic causes.

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**BACTERIOLOGY.** Laboratory Directions for Pharmacy Students. By Milan Novak, Ph.D., M.D., Professor and Head of the Department of Bacteriology and Public Health, University of Illinois, Colleges of Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy, Chicago, and Esther Meyer, Ph.G., Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Bacteriology and Public Health, University of Illinois Colleges of Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy, Chicago. Second Edition. 1947. The C. V. Mosby Company, St. Louis.

This laboratory manual is designed to present the important aspects of medical and sanitary bacteriology in 36 periods. The experiments are somewhat less elaborate than those usually arranged for medical students. The manual should be quite satisfactory as a laboratory guide for the study of bacteriology by students of pharmacy.

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**THE PREMATURE BABY.** By V. Mary Crosse, M.D. (London), D.P.H., M.M.S.A., D.R.C.O.G., Chief Obstetric Officer in charge of City of Birmingham Maternity Homes and Premature Baby Unit. With Foreword by Leonard G. Parsons, M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.O.G. With 14 illustrations. 1946. The Blakiston Company, Philadelphia.

This little volume of 142 pages discusses prematurity and its management with the clarity and certainty that only years of personal experience can give. This experience was gained at Birmingham City premature Baby Ward in England. Obstetrics in England is practiced quite differently than in this country, with many more home deliveries and much more work done by midwives. The management of premature births is, therefore, a somewhat different problem than in this country, but the simplicity of the organization and the excellent results obtained under such management are indeed a comfort about which to read. The book covers, without a waste of words, the characteristics of newborns, as well as the problems of maintaining temperature, oxygen, feeding, complications due to prematurity infections, etc.

The book is very explicit and should be of value to physicians, especially those practicing in small towns and rural areas. It can, however, be read with

profit by pediatricians, house officers and nurses. A problem studied in another country often leads to somewhat different conclusions than those generally accepted in one's own medical environment and this always presents a challenge to look objectively at our traditional practices in order to re-evaluate them.

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**THE 1946 YEAR BOOK OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY.** Edited by J. P. Greenhill, B.S., M.D., F.A.C.S. The Year Book Publishers, Inc., Chicago. Price \$3.75.

The latest issue of Dr. Greenhill's Year Book (1946) carries on the high standards of the previous editions. The literature published in the English-speaking countries has been quite comprehensively surveyed. Many of the more significant articles from South America have been reviewed. The editorial comments integrate the wide expanse of the material covered. The principal topics presented include the role of nutrition in pregnancy, abortion, the toxemias of pregnancy, analgesia and anesthesia in obstetrics, breech presentation, the Rh factor, infertility, operative technique, genital neoplasms, and menstruation and its disorders. Greenhill's work is replete with information for the senior student, the candidate for examination before the State or National Board, as well as for the practitioner and specialist in obstetrics and gynecology.

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**SEX EDUCATION, A Guide for Parents, Teachers and Youth Leaders.** By Cyril Bibby, M.A., M.Sc., F. L. S. Education Officer to the Central Council of Health Education; Senior Lecturer at the College of St. Mark and St. John, London; sometime scholar of Queen's College, Cambridge. Published October 23, 1946. 311 pages. Emerson Books, Inc., New York. Price \$2.50.

This book is the American edition of an originally English text. In common with a good many English textbooks, this one is particularly notable for its readability. The whole matter of sex education from early childhood through marriage is discussed with a conciseness and conviction that leaves no room for doubt.

A book such as this can be great help to parents and it is not amiss to remark that some of our own colleagues would profit immensely if they would give some recognition to this too frequently neglected subject.

